

Name of pargana	Police stations principally included in the pargana.	Name of pargana.	Police-station in which the pargana is principally situated.
Muhammadshāhi	Sujānagar ..	..	...
Sinduri	{ Bera ..	...	..
	{ Sānthia ...	...	..
	{ Sujanagar ...	...	...
Senābāju	{ Atgharia ...	...	...
	{ Chātinohar ...	...	.
	{ Faridpur	.	.
Surtan Pratāp	{ Bera	.	...
	{ Sānthia	.	...
Yusufnagar Tappa	{ Pābna ...	..	...
	{ Sānthia	.	...
	{ Belkuchi ...	...	...
	{ Chauhāli ..	..	...
Yusufshāhi	{ Kamārkhanda ..	.	...
	{ Shāhzādpur	.	...
	{ Ullāpāra	...	...

CHAPTER X.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

THERE are two subdivisions, viz., Sadar and Sirājganj. The sanctioned magisterial staff under the District Magistrate at Pābna consists of three officers with first class magisterial powers and one officer with second or third class powers, in addition to the Superintendent of Excise and Salt. The Subdivisional Officer at Sirājganj is assisted by a Deputy Magistrate with first class powers, and another Deputy Magistrate is stationed at Shāhzādpur. The latter generally tries cases from the Mathura thāna except those from the southern portion, which are generally heard at Pābna for the convenience of the parties, for whom the Ganges steamer service provides easy communication.

SUB-
DIVISIONS
AND STAFF.

A Subdivisional Officer of the Public Works Department, who has his headquarters at Pābna, is in charge of the Government buildings in the district as well as of the protective works designed to prevent river erosion: the district for the purpose of public works administration is under the Superintending Engineer, Northern Circle. There are also two Inspectors of Co-operative Societies for the supervision and control of the co-operative movement in the district.

The criminal work of the Sadar subdivision is fairly heavy, and the work in connection with Government estates and the tauzi, certificate and land registration departments is heavier than in other districts of the division. The Sirājganj subdivision is an onerous charge: the criminal work is heavier than in any Sadar subdivision in the division except Bogra; income-tax work is important, and there are several Government estates in which disputes about alluvion and diluvion cause a considerable amount of work. The bulk of the criminal cases come from Sirājganj and Shāhzādpur. The salient statistics for the two subdivisions in 1919-20 are given in the following statement:—

Subdivision.	Area in sq. miles	Population, 1921.	Criminal cases dis- posed of.	Cases com- mitted to sessions.
Pābna (Sadar) ...	789	557,000	1,548	18
Sirājganj ...	889	833,000	2,317	27

Subdivision.	Certificates issued.	GOVERNMENT ESTATES HELD DIRECT.		Letters issued and received.
		No	Demand.	
			Rs.	
Pabna	2,049	9	4,575	20,398
Sirājganj	387	26	6,806	8,831

For some time past it has been thought that the Sirājganj subdivision is too heavy a charge: a partial partition of it has in fact been effected by posting a full-powered Deputy Magistrate to Shāhzādpur, in addition to the one working at Sirājganj itself. In 1912 a scheme was drawn up for the constitution of a new subdivision in the south-eastern portion of the district, including parts of the present Sirājganj and Sadar subdivisions with headquarters at Bera. The District Administration Committee (1914) recommended the adoption of this scheme, under which the proposed (Bera) subdivision would have included Shāhzādpur and Chauhāli police-stations from Sirājganj, and Mathura, Sāinthia and east Sujānagar police-stations from Sadar.

Subsequently conditions were materially altered by the

Revenue thāna Police-station

SADAR SUBDIVISION.

Pabna	...	{ Pābna Atgharia Bera
Dulai	...	{ Sāinthia Bera

SIRAJGANJ SUBDIVISION

Sirājganj	...	{ Sirājganj Kāsi-pur
Sirājganj, Ullāpāra and Shāhsādpur	...	{ Belkuchi Shāhsādpur
Shāhsādpur	...	{ Chaubāli

PROPOSED SUBDIVISION

Chātmohar	...	{ Chātmohar Farīdpur
Ullāpāra	...	{ Ullāpāra Kāmārkhanda.
Rāiganj	...	{ Rāiganj. Tārā.

opening of the railway from Ishurdi in the south-western corner of the district to Sirājganj in the north-east. It was considered desirable that the headquarters of a new subdivision should be situated on the railway, so as to take full advantage of this important means of communication. A new scheme was accordingly prepared for the creation of a subdivision in the western part of the district, comprising the Chātmohar police-station with the Farīdpur outpost (in the Sadar subdivision) and the Ullāpāra police-station with

the Kāmārkhanda outpost and the Rāiganj police-station with the Tārā outpost (Sirājganj subdivision). The scheme, while

affording relief to the Sirājganj and Sadar subdivisions and taking full advantage of the new means of communication opened up by the Sāra-Sirājganj Railway, would have left the whole of the *char* area on the Jamuna under the administration of the Subdivisional Officer of Sirājganj, and the Magistrate's Court at Shāhzādpur would not have been affected. The constitution of the three subdivisions, as it would have been under this scheme, is shown in the marginal statement.

The scheme was published for criticism in 1918, and the opinions of the public were invited by Government, which was inclined to favour Bhānguria as the headquarters of the new subdivision. It was stated :—"Ullāpāra, which is an important trade centre, was at first suggested as suitable, but further investigation has shown that the land in the neighbourhood is low-lying and would have to be raised at considerable expense in order to make it suitable for the site of a civil station. These objections do not apply to Bhānguria, which is also a station on the railway, some 15 miles west of Ullāpāra. Here high and comparatively cheap land is available, and it would be possible to take up sufficient land for a civil station and yet leave room for trade expansion. It is reported that since the opening of the railway the importance of Bhānguria as a centre of the jute trade has increased considerably and is likely to increase still further. Moreover, Bhānguria is more central than Ullāpāra in regard to the greater portion of the proposed new subdivision."

In view of the conflict of opinion and of financial stringency, which has made it impossible to provide the necessary funds, a decision of the question has been deferred.

A District and Sessions Judge, who is also District and Sessions Judge for Bogra, has his headquarters at Pābna : at present he is assisted by an Additional District and Sessions Judge. The subordinate staff for the administration of civil justice consists of two Subordinate Judges who hold their courts at Pābna, three Munsifs at Pābna and three Munsifs (one additional) at Sirājganj. In addition to the stipendiary magistrates, there are four independent benches of honorary magistrates, at Pābna with seven members, at Sirājganj with three members, at Shāhzādpur with four members and at Ullāpāra with four members. There are also two honorary magistrates at Sāra, who are authorized to sit together as a bench with the powers of a magistrate of the third class.

For the purposes of police administration the district is divided between the police stations (investigating centres) shown

ADMINISTRATION OF
JUSTICE.

Police.

below with the thānas (revenue units) within which they are included :—

SADAR SUBDIVISION.		SIRĀJGANJ SUBDIVISION	
Police-station	Thāna.	Police station.	Thāna
Atgharia ...	Pābna	Chauhāli ...	Shāhzādpur.
Pābna ...		Shāhzādpur ...	Ullāpāra.
Sāra ...		Kāmārkhandā ...	
Chātmohar ...	Chātmohar	Ullāpāra ...	
Faridpur ...		Kāzipur ...	Sirājganj
Sānthia ...		Sirājganj ...	
Sujānagar ...	Dulai	Rāiganj ...	
		Tārās ...	Tārās.
Bera ...	Mathura.	Belkuchi ..	{ Shāhzādpur Sirājganj Ullāpāra.

The sanctioned strength of the district police force in 1920 was 605, viz., the Superintendent, 1 Assistant Superintendent, 1 Deputy Superintendent, 5 Inspectors, 53 Sub-Inspectors, 61 head-constables and 483 constables, representing one policeman to every 3 square miles and to every 2,305 persons. The village police or chaukidars numbered 2,319 with 209 dafadars viz., 1,088 chaukidars and 101 dafadars in the Pābna subdivision, and 1,231 chaukidars and 108 dafadars in the Sirājganj subdivision. On the average (including dafadars) there was one chaukidar to every three-fourths of a square mile and to every 549 persons; the cost of this force was Rs. 1,82,000, viz., Rs. 85,600 in the Pābna and Rs. 96,100 in the Sirājganj subdivisions.

A feature of the crime of Pābna is the number of riots arising from disputes in connection with the possession of the valuable lands which are constantly being formed by the changes of the courses of the great rivers. Dacoities by river as well as land are also regrettably frequent; one local gang, of whom four were convicted of dacoity in 1920, while 32 others were bound down under section 110, Criminal Procedure Code, is known to have been responsible for 17 dacoities, both by land and water, in Pābna, Rājshāhi and Mymensingh.

There is a district jail at Pābna with accommodation for 235 prisoners. This total includes barracks for 144 males and 7 female convicts, 28 under-trial prisoners and 4 civil prisoners, while there are observation cells for 5 prisoners and hospital accommodation for 21. The average daily number of prisoners

in 1920 was 175 males and 2 females. There is also a subsidiary jail at Sirājganj with accommodation for 34 prisoners. The principal jail industries are oil-pressing, brick-making, *sarki*-pounding and the weaving of carpets and cloth.

The excise revenue in the year 1919-20 aggregated Rs. 2,22,000, representing an incidence of 2 annas 5 pies per head of the population. Of this sum Rs. 83,000 were derived from country spirits and Rs. 1,12,000 from hemp drugs, mainly *ganja*. The average consumption in the year was half a gallon of country spirit and one-sixth of a seer of hemp drugs for every hundred persons. There were altogether 20 shops for the sale of country spirits, representing one for every 92 square miles and for every 71,000 persons while there was on the average one shop for the sale of hemp drugs to every 8 square miles in urban areas and to every 54 square miles in rural areas.

In 1919 altogether Rs. 70,812 were collected as income-tax from 1,068 assesses including 555 firms (the largest number in any but three districts in Bengal), 6 companies and 507 individuals.

There are nine registration offices in the district situated at the following places:—

Sadar subdivision	Sirājganj subdivision.
Bera (joint with Sujānagar).	Dhāngara.
Chātmohar.	Shāhzādpur.
Pābna.	Sirājganj.
Sujānagar.	Sthal (joint with Shāhzādpur)
	Ullāpāra.

Atgharia and Sāra
Chātmohar
Chauhāli.
Faridpur
Kāmārkhauda
Kāzipur
Mathura.

Pābna
Sāntona
Shāhzādpur and
Belkuchi.
Raiganj
Sirājganj (two).
Sujāragar

There are also 15 Muhammadan Registrars and Kāzis with jurisdiction over the police-stations shown in the margin.

Pābna forms with Bogra a constituency for the election of a non-Muhammadan member to the Legislative Council. There are 18,503 voters on the electoral roll; 4,393 or 32 per cent. of these voted at the election of 1920. Four candidates were nominated, and Sir Ashutosh Chaudhuri was elected by a majority of 2,811. The district is a separate constituency for the election of a Muhammadan member: for this purpose there are 13,814 voters on the electoral roll. In 1920 Khān Bahādur Wasimuddin Ahmad was elected by a majority of 1,569 over the only other candidate. Altogether 1,703 electors recorded their votes or 12·3 per cent. of the electorate.

ELECTIONS
TO THE
LEGISLA-
TIVE
COUNCIL.

CHAPTER XI.

LOCAL SELF GOVERNMENT.

DISTRICT
BOARD

THE District Board used to consist of 16 members, of whom half were appointed by Government, with the District Magistrate as *ex-officio* Chairman. In 1921, however, it was directed that the membership of the Board should be increased to 24 members, of whom only one-third are to be appointed by Government; seven of the members are to be elected by the Sadar Local Board and nine by the Sirājganj Government Local Board. In the same year also the District Board was given the privilege of electing a non-official Chairman; the first Chairman, so elected, was Khān Bahādur Wasimuddin Ahmad, M.L.C. The income of the Board has been rising steadily, increasing from Rs. 1,09,000 in 1900-01 to Rs. 1,64,000 in 1910-11. Since then it has been still further increased owing to the Government making over to the Board the receipts from the public works cess, and in 1920-21 it aggregated Rs. 2,86,886 excluding the opening balance.

The District Board maintains three dispensaries and gives grants-in-aid to ten dispensaries, as shown in the margin. It

Dispensaries maintained

1. Chak Sohāgpur Dharanidhar.
2. Kāstipur.
3. Sihal.

Dispensaries aided

1. Bera.
2. Bharenga.
3. Chātmochar.
4. Pabna Sadar.
5. Naiganj.
6. Bāhāddapur.
7. Sirājganj Victoria.
8. Sital.
9. Tātāband.
10. Tāra.

also subsidizes doctors at Atgharia, Chhatak, Gandhail, Kansona, Mirkutia and Solakura. For the furtherance of education the Board maintains one middle school and 93 primary schools, besides the Elliott-Banamali School, and it gives aid to 25 middle schools, 68 upper primary schools, and 1,071 lower primary schools in addition to 17 other schools. The

following is a list of the Middle and Primary schools maintained by the District Board :—

Serial No.	Names of schools.	Serial No.	Names of schools.
<i>Middle Vernacular school.</i>		40.	Jorpukuria
1.	Udaypur.	41.	Ahmedpur.
<i>Lower Primary schools.</i>		42.	Barat.
2.	Yakubpur.	43.	Ulatchāndipur.
3.	Simulohara.	44.	Raipur.
4.	Malahchi.	45.	Gopālpur.
5.	Lakshipur.	46.	Mathurapur.
6.	Krishnaganj	47.	Banabāria.
7.	Bahādurpur.	48.	Beraghona.
8.	Babulchara.	49.	Chhatiantali.
9.	Deārsāhapur.	50.	Pānchasaarutia.
10.	Khidīpur.	51.	Sibnātpur.
11.	Naldah	52.	Pashimnagaradaha.
12.	Khordachāndpur.	53.	Subarnagānti.
13.	Charlārāpur	54.	Dhukuria.
14.	Bhawānpur	55.	Betua
15.	Charsiliūpur.	56.	Charjhungul.
16.	Himātpur.	57.	Barabāria
17.	Chāndpur	58.	Raiganj.
18.	Charshādīpur	59.	Hashil
19.	Billaribāri.	60.	Kruhnadia.
20.	Goswāmīrāmpur	61.	Barabil.
21.	Chandwa.	62.	Nandalalpur.
22.	Sadullapur.	63.	Durgadaha.
23.	Bhulbāria.	64.	Sendigī alia.
24.	Manmathapur.	65.	Janiirta
25.	Chāmārpur.	66.	Dugah.
26.	Hariakahan.	67.	Dādpur.
27.	Huikhāli.	68.	Teghari.
28.	Banagram	69.	Khās Dākā
29.	Paikpāra.	70.	Khās Chāndmetuani.
30.	Nagdemra.	71.	Khās Dikālpur.
31.	Brisabikha.	72.	Dewantārātia.
32.	Chakla.	73.	Rupsi
33.	Dodliakol.	74.	Balarāmpur.
34.	Māshkhāli.	75.	Charsamāsepur
35.	Boramāra.	76.	Nagrauba.
36.	Lakshimpur.	77.	Rahimpur
37.	Rajnāryānpur.	78.	Udhanā.
38.	Amāpur.	79.	Brahmangaon.
39.	Dadai.	80.	Jogjibānpur.
		81.	Basidpur.
		82.	Kalupāra.
		83.	Saruppar Bāllia.

Serial No.	Names of schools.	Serial No.	Names of schools.
<i>Lower Primary schools—concl'd.</i>		<i>Pāñchāyati Union schools for boys.</i>	
84.	Bachbāria.	90	Kadamtali.
85.	Charkawak.	91.	Sibpur
86.	Chalitadānga.	92.	Suigrām.
87.	Simuildair.	93	Sultānpur.
<i>Under construction</i>		<i>Pāñchāyati Union school for girls.</i>	
88	Char Kāzipur.	94	Sonatala.
89.	Cha. Pigritekani.		

There are altogether 170 pounds under the District Board, which in 1920-21 brought in an income of Rs. 10,715. The mileage of the roads maintained by it is 34 miles of metalled roads and 691 miles of non-metalled roads, besides 253 miles of village roads. The engineering staff consists of the District Engineer, two overseers at Pābna, an overseer at Sirājganj, a sub-overseer at Chātmohar and a sub-overseer at Ullāpāra : there is also a sub-overseer under the Sirājganj Local Board.

The following statement gives details of the ferries under the District Board :—

Serial No.	Name of ferry	Name of river, stream, etc.	Annual rent payable by lessee (1921-22).
		PĀBNA SUBDIVISION.	Rs.
1	Ariadingi ...	Ariadingi Jola on the 2nd mile of the Ataikula Tāntiband road.	6
2	Ataikula ...	Ichhāmāti ...	50
3	Bājītpur ...	Padma ...	700
4	Bānsherabada ...	Bānsherabada Jola on the 9th mile of old Sāra track.	5
5	Barnai ...	Barnai Jola on the 2nd mile of Supānagar cross road.	4
6	Old Pera ...	Ichhāmāti ...	142
7	Blawānipur ...	Ratnai ...	10
8	Blānguria ...	Barai ...	600
9	Boysa (Gosaidaha)	Gumāni ...	1,202

Serial No	Name of ferry.	Name of river, stream, etc.	Annual rent pay- able by lessee (1921-22).
			Rs.
10	Chātmohar Bazar.	Nutan Baral	331
11	Chāndināri	... Nāzirpur Jola on the 2nd mile of the old Sara track	*
12	Chandwa	... Chandwa Jola on the last mile of old Sirājganj road	4
13	Chāndipur	... Barnai Jola	1
14	Char Rādhakantapur	Padma	470
15	Dāsuria	... Dāsuria Khāl on the 4th mile of the road from Dāsuria to Silampur	6
16	Fakirpur	... Ichhāmati	101
17	Idipur	... Chuknai	160
18	Jotgāzi	... Dāsuria Khāl on the 1st mile of the Silampur track.	2
19	Kāuchādia	... Padma	102
20	Mulgrām	.. Chuknai	25
21	Nischintapur	... Nischintapur Jola on the 7th mile of the Sāthāria road	22
22	Poradānga	... Poradānga Jola on the 14th mile of the road from Tāntiband to Chinakhara	143
23	Selendah	... Selendah Jola on the 23rd mile of the old Serājganj road	*
24	Sāinthia	... Ichhāmati river and Sāinthia Jola on the 22nd mile of the new Serājganj road.	250
25	Sujānagar	... Barnai Jola on the 3rd mile of the Khalshpur-Sāthāria road.	112
SIRAJGANJ SUBDIVISION			
1	Alukdia	... Ichhāmati	2†
2	Tengrail	... Do	

* Not settled for want of a bidder.

† Settled in one lot.

Serial No.	Name of ferry.	Name of river, stream, etc.	Annual rent payable by lessees (1921-22).
3	Athāradaha ...	Athāradaha Khāl on the 9th mile of the Kajuri road.	Ra 10°
4	Chaubāli Bazar ...	Sthal Khāl on the junction of the Belkuchi-Nakālia track.	
5	Saidpur ...	Athāradaha Khāl on the 36th mile of the new Sirājganj road.	
6	Sthal Khāl ...	Sthal Khāl on the 11th mile of Kajuri road.	
7	Baral ...	Phuljhur ...	77
8	Banshia ...	Jamuna ...	6
9	Bahuki ...	Ichhāmāti ...	275
10	Betnāli ...	Betnāh Nullah on the 6th mile of old Bogra road.	40
11	Belkuchi ...	Kunai on old Jamuna ...	310
12	Brahmagācha ...	Ichhāmāti ...	50
13	Bhuiagānti ...	Phuljhur or Karatoya ...	695
14	Baotāra ...	Dhānbāndi ...	52
15	Berakhola-Bera ...	Hurāsāgar ...	1,625
16	Bāramāshia ...	Bāramāshia Jola on the Bāgbāti-Brahmagācha track	...
17	Chandrakona ...	Chandrakona Nullah on the 19th mile of the new Bogra road.	115
18	Chandaikona ...	Karatoya ...	730
19	Chākipāra Kumrāl ...	Kumrāl Khāl on the 12th mile of the new Bogra road.	25°
20	Kumrāl ...	Kumrāl Khāl ...	
21	Charkawak ...	Charkawak Khāl on the 1st mile of the Ullāpāra-Belkuchi road.	25
22	Demra ...	Baral ...	3
23	Dhāngora ...	Jhuljhur or Karatoya ...	2,525
24	Erandaha ...	Ditto ...	1,200
25	Ghurka ...	Ditto ...	400

Serial No.	Name of ferry	Name of river, stream, etc.	Annual rent payable by lessee (1921-22).
26	Gangārāmpur ...	Gangārāmpur Jola on the 10th mile of old Bogra road.	Ra. 5°
27	Hashil ...	Hashil Nullah on the 11th mile of old Bogra road.	
28	Lakshunkola ...	Lakshunkola Jola on the 10th mile of old Bogra road	
29	Nalua (Bil) ...	Nalua Bil on the 11th mile of old Bogra road	
30	Gurkha Khāl ...	Gurkha Khāl on the 14th mile of the new Bogra road	8
31	Ghatua ...	Phuljhur or Karatoya ...	427
32	Char Jamālpur ...	Ditto ...	40
33	Kaijuri ...	Hurāsāgar ...	2
34	Kāliganja ...	Phuljhur ...	17
35	Nabipur-Narina ...	Do ...	350
36	Natuarpura Surber ...	Jamuna channel ...	40
37	Pāngāshi ...	Pāngāshi ...	160
38	Ichhāmāti ...	Ichhāmāti ...	†
39	Panchil ...	Panchil Khāl on the 11th mile of the new Bogra road.	‡
40	Purbadela ...	Phuljhur channel ...	25
41	Rāmkanatapur Raotāra	Gohala ...	500
42	Saidābād Porabāria ...	Hurāsāgar ...	45
43	Brifaltata ...	Jamuna channel ...	60
44	Telkupi Khāl ...	Telkupi Khāl ...	2§
45	Ulmāpāra ...	Phuljhur ...	350

° Settled in one lot.

† Subsidiary to Pāngāshi ferry.

‡ Not settled for want of tidings.

§ Not on any road.

**LOCAL
BOARDS**

There is a Local Board for each subdivision. Hitherto the Sadar Local Board and Sirājganj Local Board have consisted of 12 members each, but the number was raised in 1921 to 18. The Sadar Local Board, as already mentioned, elects seven members of the District Board and nine are elected by the Sirājganj Local Board.

**VILLAGE
SELF-
GOVERN-
MENT ACT**

The Village Self-Government Act has been extended to the district, but no Union Boards have yet (1921) been constituted. There are, however, four Union Committees under the Local Self-Government Act, viz., Bera, Chātmohar, Shāhādpur and Ullāpāra.

**MUNICI-
PALITIES**

There are only two municipalities in the district, viz., Pābna and Sirājganj.

Pābna

Pābna was first constituted a municipality in 1876 and its affairs are administered by a Board of 18 Commissioners, of whom 12 are elected. The area within municipal limits is 5 square miles and is divided into four wards. The number of rate-payers in 1920-21 was 3,911 or 20 per cent. of the population. The municipal income is derived mainly from a tax on persons at the rate of 15 annas per Rs. 100 on the monthly income of rate-payers. Government and other public buildings are assessed at 7½ per cent. of their annual value. Latrine fees are also levied at Rs. 7-13 per cent. or 1 anna 3 pies per rupee on the annual value of holdings. The total income in 1920-21 (excluding the opening balance) was Rs. 32,976 and the average incidence of taxation was only Re. 1-7-6 per head of the population, which is a comparatively low figure. The mileage of the roads in the municipal area is about 32 miles, of which only 6 miles are metalled.

Sirājganj

The Sirājganj municipality was first established in 1869 and is administered by 18 Municipal Commissioners, of whom two-thirds are elected. It is a large municipality extending over 11½ square miles; there are four wards, and in 1920-21 there were 4,175 rate-payers or 16 per cent. of the total population. The income in the same year was Rs. 28,628 excluding the opening balance, the incidence of taxation being only Re. 0-15-4 per head of the population. It is not surprising that with such low taxation few large works of improvement have been carried out in the town, and that, though it is an important trade centre with many wealthy merchants, the main bazar roads are still unmetalled. The form of taxation in force is the

personal tax, *i.e.*, a tax according to circumstances and property, which is assessed at the rate of Rs. 1 per Rs. 100 of the rate-payer's income; as in Pābna and elsewhere, Government and other public buildings are assessed at 7½ per cent. of their annual value. Latrine fees are also levied at the rate of Rs. 7-13 per cent. on the annual value of holdings.

CHAPTER XII.

EDUCATION.

LITERACY

A FAIR indication of the extent to which education is diffused is afforded by the census statistics of literacy. The test of literacy is ability both to read and write, with this further qualification that a person is only recorded as literate if he can write a letter to a friend and read the answer to it; all persons who are unable to do this are entered in the census schedules as illiterate. The total number of persons in the district who came up to the prescribed standard of literacy in 1921 was 91,299, viz., 82,359 males representing 11·7 per cent. of the male population and 8,940 females representing 1 per cent. of the female population. The numbers of those literate in English were 18,575 males and 497 females one of every 38 of those returned as literate are literate in English. The census figures serve to show how much more advanced the Hindus are than the Muhammadans, for approximately one of every four Hindu males is literate, whereas the proportion among Muhammadans is one of every 15.

In 1920-21 the number of boys at school was 40,863, or 5·6 per cent. of the male population. This proportion was higher than that returned by any other district in the Rājshāhi division except Bogra, where it was 7·5 per cent.

INSPECTOR-
THE STAFF.

The district is included in the charge of the Inspector of Schools, Rājshāhi Division. The district staff consists of two Deputy Inspectors of Schools, one for the Sadar subdivision and the other for the Sirājganj subdivision, and five Sub-Inspectors of Schools, each in charge of a circle. The five circles are Sadar, Dulai, Sirājganj, Shāhzādpur and Ullāpāra. The average number of primary schools for the inspection of which each Sub-Inspector is responsible is 254—a very high figure, reached nowhere else in the Rājshāhi Division, which is usually claimed to be more than a Sub-Inspector can properly manage.

The following table shows the different classes of educational institutions in the district in 1920-21 and the number of students on the rolls on 31st March 1921 :—

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS.

Institutions.	Total number.	NUMBER OF STUDENTS.	
		Male	Female.
Colleges ...	1	327	...
High schools ...	30	6,014	...
Middle English schools ...	48	3,707	105
„ vernacular „ ...	5	191	138
Upper primary „ ...	73	3,374	...
Lower „ „ ...	1,568	25,927	12,067
Special „ ...	31	1,479	..
Total public ...	1,755	41,019	12,310
Private ...	3	171	...
GRAND TOTAL ...	1,758	41,190	12,310

There is a second grade college at Pābna, known as the Edward College. It was originally a school founded by Babu Gopāl Chandra Lāhiri, who in 1898 added classes teaching up to the entrance or matriculation standard of the Calcutta University. It was at first known as the Pābna Institution and subsequently as the Pābna College; it was given its present name in 1911 in order to commemorate the memory of the late King-Emperor Edward VII. New college and hostel buildings were subsequently added on a site on the bank of the river Ichhāmāti with the help of a donation of Rs. 50,000 given by the late Rai Banamālī Rai Bahādur of Tārās and a grant of the same amount from Government. The management of the College is vested in a committee consisting of the District Magistrate (President, *ex-officio*), three nominees of Government, one nominee of the eldest male descendant of the late Rai Banamālī Rai Bahādur (in consideration of his generous donation of Rs. 50,000 to the College), one member elected by other donors and subscribers, the Chairman of the Pābna municipality, *ex-officio*, the Principal of the College (Secretary), *ex-officio*, two members elected by the retiring Governing Body, and two

Edward College, Pābna

members elected by the Professors of the College from among themselves, one from the Arts and the other from the Science Department.

The College teaches the following subjects up to the Intermediate standard in Arts :—English, Bengali, Sanskrit, Persian, Mathematics, Logic, History and Chemistry. The staff consists of a Principal and Professor of English Literature, a Professor of Mathematics, two Professors of Sanskrit, a Professor of History, two Professors of Logic, two Junior Professors of English Literature, a Professor of Chemistry, a Professor of Persian, a Demonstrator of Chemistry and a Librarian.

The tuition fee is Rs. 5 a month : an additional fee of Re. 1 is charged to each of the second year students reading chemistry. The boarding charges amount to about Rs. 10 per mensem. Five per cent. of the students on the rolls are admitted free, besides Government scholars. There are two scholarships of the value of Rs. 8 a month called the Banamāli Jubilee scholarships, after their donor, Rai Banamāli Ray Bahādur of Tārās. They are open to the two best poor students who pass the Matriculation Examination, one from the Pābna Zila School and the other from the Sirājganj High English School, and who fail to obtain a Government scholarship.

High
schools

The following is a statement of the high schools in the district and of the number of pupils on the rolls of each on 31st March 1921 :—

Names of schools.	Number of pupils on the rolls on the 31st March 1921.		
<i>Managed by Government—</i>			
Pābna Zila School ...	...	...	397
<i>Aided—</i>			
<i>High English—</i>			
Sirājganj B. L. ...	...	...	475
Ullāpāra ...	...	...	173*
Chaubāri ...	...	...	119
Shāhādpur ...	...	...	227
Porjana ...	...	...	173
Pothājā ...	...	...	114
Rādhānagar ...	...	...	144
Total			1,425

Names of schools.	Number of pupils on the rolls on the 31st March 1921.
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Unaided—

High English—

Sirājganj Victoria	...	...	242
Harinabāgbāti	...	...	216
Meghai	...	...	94
Mesra	...	...	48
Salap	...	...	198
Mohanpur	...	...	50
Jāmirkā	...	...	174
Sthal Pakrāsi	...	...	264
Sohāgpur	...	...	206
Daulatpur	...	...	122
Chātmohtar	...	...	234
Pābna Institution	...	...	554
Bauwārīnagar	...	...	313
Sāra Mārwarī	...	...	305
Pābna Victory	...	...	139
Shillai	...	...	114
Bera	...	...	150
Nakālia	...	...	191
Dhopakhola	...	...	172
Khailpur	...	...	165
Purān Bhārenga	...	...	131
Nutan Bhārenga	...	...	119
Total	...	...	4,192

Of the 48 middle English schools 27 are aided and 21 unaided. Middle schools
The want of popularity of middle vernacular schools is apparent from their paucity, there being only five, of which one is maintained by Government and four are aided. One of the middle English schools and one of the middle vernacular schools are girls' schools established in 1920-21.

The table already given under the head of educational institutions will have shown that the great majority of the primary schools are of the lower primary status, in which young children are taught. The panchāyati union scheme, of which the object is to provide each union with a primary school of a good standard, has been in force for some time. Out of 210 panchāyati unions in the district 87 have been Primary schools.

provided with Board primary schools, while 55 have upper primary schools which serve the purpose of Board primary schools.

**Training and
other
special
schools**

The special schools include two training schools for primary school teachers, which had 44 students on the rolls on 31st March 1921, and 29 other schools with 1,435 students. The two training schools for primary school teachers, generally known as *guru*-training schools, are situated at Shāhzādpur in the Sirājganj subdivision and at the district headquarters of Pābna. That at Shāhzādpur has 14 teachers under training and that at Pābna 30, of whom 19 are Muhammadans. The latter has a staff of three instructors and has been brought under the scheme for *guru*-training schools of an improved type with effect from 1st July 1920. The establishment of another school of the improved type at Sirājganj has been sanctioned. There are five schools for backward communities (Namasudras, Santāls, Muchis and Dhobis) with 150 pupils.

**Private
institutions**

The educational returns of the Education Department for 1920-21 shew only five schools of the marginally-noted class. Three have recently come under the head of private institutions, viz., the Rai Daulatpur High School, the Aryan Academy and the Amrita Lal Middle English School (an unrecognised school) in Pābna, which have been converted into private schools in consequence of the non-co-operation movement.

**Technical
schools.**

The chief institution for technical education is the Elliott-Banamāli Technical School at Pābna, which was established in 1892. Its name commemorates its founder, Raj Banamālī Ray Bahādur of Tārās and the then Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, Sir Charles Elliott. It is managed and maintained by the District Board with the help of a Government grant-in-aid. The institution has four departments, viz., apprentice, survey, artisan and B class. In the apprentice department mathematics, surveying, drawing, engineering, mechanics, carpentry and blacksmith's work are taught. In the survey class mathematics, surveying, drawing and engineering are taught, and in the artisan class the boys are trained in carpentry and blacksmith's work together with elementary drawing. In the B class practical instruction is given to boys of the Zila school, Government paying a monthly grant of Rs. 2 for each boy up

to a maximum of Rs. 70. The following shows the classification of pupils in each department in 1921 :—

		Hindu.	Mohammadan.	Total
Apprentice	...	52	5	59
Survey	...	17	7	24
Artisan	...	10	3	13
B class	...	20	6	26
		—	—	—
Total	...	99	23	122
		—	—	—

In addition 136 boys of the Zila school attend the manual training class in batches of about 30 per day. The income from fees amounts to Rs. 144 a month. The staff consists of 9 members., viz., 4 teachers, 1 carpentry instructor, 2 smithy instructors, 1 polisher and 1 clerk and hostel superintendent. The establishment cost is about Rs. 600 a month.

There is also a Government weaving school at Pābna, which was established in 1915 and is affiliated to the Serampore Weaving Institute. The subjects taught are practical weaving, design and analysis of cloth, yarn calculation and drawing. In 1921 the number of pupils receiving instruction was 22, all but one being Muhammadans, the sons of weavers. Twenty stipends are allotted annually for the school. Fourteen fly-shuttle looms are at work, but the outturn is small, averaging 3 yards a day per loom. The school is managed by a committee consisting of 11 members, of whom five are *ex-officio*, viz., the District Magistrate (Chairman), the Vice-Chairman of the District Board (Secretary), the Sadar Subdivisional Officer, the District Deputy Inspector of Schools and the weaving teacher of the school.

A women's industrial school was also established at Pābna in 1913 ; it is managed by missionaries and receives a grant-in-aid from Government. Instruction is given in needle work, reading, writing and arithmetic, and there were 54 pupils in 1921.

The following account of the education of Muhammadans has been kindly contributed by Mr. J. A. Taylor, Assistant Director of Public Instruction (Muhammadan Education), Bengal :—

The following extracts from notes written by the Collector of Pabna in 1870 and 1873 shows the position of the Muhammadans at that time :—"The Muhammadans of Pabna are rapidly declining in position, owing for the most part to their conservative habits, which prevent them from studying English, or from progressing in any way beyond the condition of their forefathers and partly also to the jealousy shown towards them by educated Hindus who monopolise all, or nearly all, the Government appointments. The leading ryots or cultivators are generally Muhammadans, and they frequently rise to the position of traders, boat-owners, and holders of small estates, their savings being usually spent in building boats or purchasing lands. The sons of principal ryots generally learn to read and write, and some few among them study the Korān. In most of the villages there are houses for praying in which a *mulla* or priest is employed on a salary of one or two rupees per month, with an additional allowance for diet. The pay of the *mulla*, and the cost of building and repairing the houses of prayer, are generally met by local subscriptions, but in some villages mosques are built by the individual wealthy residents. The material condition of the people is not good, the chief cause being the total ignorance and absence of education among the agricultural classes, who are thus placed at the mercy of zamīndāri servants and others, whose interest it is that the ryots should remain in their present state."

As in other parts of Bengal, the Muhammadans of this district, the majority of whom belong to the poor cultivating class, had little or no chance of bettering their position owing to their poverty, their own conservative habits and the jealousy shown towards them by educated Hindus, who took advantage of every opportunity for getting education and tried to keep Moslems from the schools. Muhammadan parents, however, sent their children to the village mosques or prayer-houses to learn the Korān with the *mullas* and a very few of them, who were farsighted, and who could afford to pay, sent their children to English and vernacular schools.

The following figures taken from the educational statistics for the year 1870-71 show the then position of Muhammadans in the schools :—

Classes of schools		Number of schools	Number of pupils	Number of Muhammadan pupils
Government English	...	1	167	1
" vernacular	...	2	91	9
Normal	...	1	75	1
Aided English	...	15	585	20
" vernacular	..	43	1,783	234
" girls'	...	3	74	5
Total	...	65	2,775	297

The figures disclose the fact that though the Muhammadans predominated in the district population, the pupils attending schools of various kinds numbered only 297 or 10·7 per cent. Such was the position of Muhammadans in respect of education 50 years ago.

A great extension of primary education took place under the reforms introduced by Sir George Campbell in 1872-73. On the 31st March 1875 there were 220 aided vernacular schools of the lower class attended by 6,886 pupils. The total number of Government and aided schools was 276, attended by 9,701 pupils, of whom 3,525 or more than one-third were Muhammadans. This was satisfactory, but it may be noted that the bulk of the pupils belonged to the lowest or infant stage.

The first institution for the teaching of English started by Government in the district was the Pābna Zila School. It was established in 1853 as a Government English school. The Hindus, quick to perceive the great advantage which a knowledge of English literature and science would give them, eagerly availed themselves of the opportunity of acquiring a knowledge of western subjects taught in the Government institution, and also started schools of their own on similar lines, receiving aid from Government for their maintenance. The Muhammadans, for reasons given in a previous paragraph, lagged behind. A well-known official summed up the position thus—"Whilst the Hindus were showing readiness,

zeal and generosity towards the spread of English education, far different were the feelings of the Musalmāns, whose attitude towards English education was anything but friendly." Having a leaning towards Arabic learning and being followers of traditional maxims and principles, Muhammadans sent their children to the Dacca, Calcutta and Hooghly Madrasas and started and maintained a senior Madrasa of their own at Sirājganj. But in western education they took little or no part. Government viewed their backward condition with sympathy and tried to help and encourage them. Two special Assistant Inspectors of Schools for Muhammadan Education, the late Khān Bahādur Maulvi Muhammad Ibrahim and Maulvi Abdul Karim, were appointed by Government between 1890—1900 to try and show the members of their community the benefits of western education and to watch over the interests of Muhammadan schools and scholars. They did much for the community in the Province, and the Muhammadans of Pābna also benefited from their endeavours. As a result Muhammadans developed some taste for western learning, but progress was slow. The district could boast of only three graduates up to 1905, viz., Maulvi Mofukharul Islām, B.L., Maulvi Muhammad Irfānulla, B.L., and Khān Bahādur Maulvi Wasimuddin Ahmad, B.L.

In 1905, the year of the Partition of Bengal, they suddenly awoke to a sense of their duty, interest and responsibility. This administrative change was more effective in stirring up the community than the multifarious strenuous efforts of half a century, and another contributing factor was the appointment of a Muhammadan gentleman as District and Sessions Judge, who was ready to help them whenever they approached him. They became enthusiastic, started secondary and primary schools, and began to send their children to high and middle schools in large numbers. Preachers toured the district urging people to take to modern education and in the course of a few years progress was most marked. Before the Partition there was not a single Muhammadan from this district in the superior services. At present there are two Deputy Magistrates, three Deputy Inspectors of Schools, and several Kārungos, Sub-Inspectors of Police and Schools and some clerks in the Secretariat, and there are also several legal and medical practitioners.

The following figures show the position of the Muhammadans of Pābna in respect of education before the Partition and the progress they made during the decade 1904 to 1914 :—

Classes of schools.	1904-05.			1914-15.			Increase or decrease of Muhammadan pupils.
	No. of schools.	Total strength.	No. of Muhammadans.	No. of schools.	Total strength.	No. of Muhammadans.	
High English ...	20	3,680	771	20	6,609	2,388	+ 1,617
Middle „ ...	32	3,467	823	46	4,826	2,163	+ 1,340
„ vernacular ...	15	717	269	7	518	151	- 98
Upper primary ...	129	5,843	2,415	107	5,431	3,068	- 347
Lower „ ...	449	10,725	7,099	779	23,635	17,646	+10,547
Special {	Training ...	2	12	10	24	16	+ 6
	Industrial ...	1	108	1	108	27	+ 14
	Other ...	13	590	14	720	602	+ 86
Total public	654	24,132	12,947	976	41,873	26,081	+12,104
Private ...	7	141	141	28	968	710	+ 569
GRAND TOTAL	661	24,273	13,088	1,004	42,841	26,791	+12,673

It may be observed, however, that though the rate of progress has been remarkable, Muhammadans are not even now on an equal footing with Hindus in political, professional or industrial life. The European war in no small degree affected their economic condition and the recent non-co-operation movement has worked to their disadvantage.

According to the census of 1921, Muhammadans represent 1,053,571 or 76 of the total population. The number of Muhammadans under instruction both in public and private schools, excluding the Pābna College, was returned at 36,207 on the 31st March 1921, and the percentage of Muhammadan pupils to the Muhammadan population of school-going age was 22·5. In the high stage they represented 4·1 per cent., in the middle stage 4·3 and in the primary stage 88·2 per cent.

Among the students on the rolls of the Pābna College there are 98 Muhammadans. In high schools on the 31st March 1921 there were 1,774 Muhammadan pupils, in middle English 1,414 and in middle vernacular 81: the corresponding figures for the previous year were 2,661, 1,648 and 89, respectively, so that

Collegiate
and
secondary
education

there has been a net loss of 1,129 pupils. The causes for this decrease are more economic than political, but there is no doubt that the non-co-operation movement lent intensity to the force of the causes already at work. The bulk of the Muhammadan pupils come from the cultivating and weaving classes, and these have felt economic difficulties more than others; and owing to the influence of the Khilāfat agitators there has grown up a bitterness of feeling among Muhammadans against the British people and British institutions.

There are three high and one middle English schools in the district managed by Muhammadans, viz., the Chaubāri Islāmiā High English, the Meghal High English, the Daulatpur High English and the Gāndhail Middle English, which have been seriously affected by economic difficulties and by the non-co-operation movement.

**Primary
education.**

In primary education Muhammadans hold their own. *Maktabs* flourish both in number and in attendance, the education imparted by them being congenial to the taste of the people.

Madrasas

There are altogether 18 Madrasas in the district, viz., one senior, 7 junior of the reformed type and 10 which follow the old course. The number of pupils attending these institutions rose from 1,141 to 1,251 during the year ending 31st March 1921. The total direct expenditure incurred during the year for the maintenance of the Madrasas was Rs. 25,485, of which Rs. 8,134 came from Provincial revenues, Rs. 2,247 from the District fund and the rest from private sources.

The Sirājganj Senior Madrasa was established in 1892, with the object of imparting religious education to Moslems. It started with about 100 pupils. The founders of the institution were Hāji Khairulla and Maulāna Abdul Bāri. It followed the old course (known as Nizāmīa) based on the traditional courses of the Madrasas of Bāgdād and was affiliated to the Calcutta Madrasa. The reformed course was introduced in 1915. The Madrasa has hitherto been accommodated in a corrugated iron-roofed and mat-walled house, located in the congested portion of the town. The site and the accommodation have been the subject of criticism from all visitors—from His Excellency the Governor down to inspecting officers of lower rank, but the difficulty has at last been removed. A suitable site has been acquired for the Madrasa at a cost of Rs. 5,643 and a masonry

building is under construction. The estimated cost of the building is Rs. 22,785, towards which a capital grant of Rs. 20,000 has been received from Government. There are now 190 boys on the rolls, 33 in the old senior section (2nd, 3rd and 4th-year classes) and the rest in classes IX to I under the new scheme. The staff consists of 14 members, viz., the Superintendent, 6 Arabic teachers, 5 English teachers and 2 vernacular teachers.

The total establishment cost is Rs. 736 a month. This is met from fees, averaging Rs. 24.3, a Government grant of Rs. 350, a municipal grant of Rs. 5, and the rest from public subscriptions.

The marginal statement shows the junior Madrasas of the reformed type, which are in receipt of aid from the Education Department. Two of these are not very successful, but the other five institutions are doing well. They are well-housed, fairly well equipped and staffed with qualified teachers. There is a tendency to convert some of the old type Madrasas into those of the reformed type, but progress is not rapid. The average cost of the maintenance of a junior Madrasa of the old type is Rs. 40 a month and the average minimum scale for a junior Madrasa of the new type is Rs. 125; even with the Government grant of Rs. 62, the new type of Madrasa costs the people themselves 33 per cent. more than the Madrasa of the old type.

Of the total number of 12,310 girls under instruction as returned on the 31st March 1921, Muhammadan girls numbered 9,289, all in the primary stage.

Education
of girls

Both the Deputy Inspectors and four of the Sub-Inspectors in 1921 were Muhammadana. In high English schools there are 105 Moslem teachers out of 378, in middle English 127 out of 267 and in middle vernacular 7 out of 14. In the Government High School there are five Moslems (including two Maulvis) out of 18.

Inspecting
officers and
teachers.

CHAPTER XIII.

GAZETTEER.

Bera.—A village in the Mathura thāna, Sadar subdivision, situated at the junction of the Ichhāmati, Baral and Hurāsāgar rivers. With its constituent villages and *pārās* or hamlets (e.g., Beragola, Bera-grām, Bangrām, Doreta-Bera, Kāgmāripāra and Shalima) it has a population of several thousands. It is an important local market with a considerable trade in jute and contains a jute press of Landale & Clark, Limited. It also contains a police-station, a sub-registry office and a small dispensary. As stated in Chapter X, it was at one time proposed to make Bera the headquarters of a subdivision comprising the south-eastern part of the district, but the idea was abandoned owing to its distance from the railway.

Chatmohar.—Village in the west of the Sadar subdivision, situated on the river Baral, 19 miles north of Pābna. It is the headquarters of a thāna and contains a charitable dispensary, sub-registry office, high school and post and telegraph office; there is a railway station on the line to Sirājānj a short distance to the south. There is an old mosque with an inscription showing that it was built in the year 1581 A.D. The translation of the inscription given in Blochmann's *Ain-i-Akbari* (Vol. I, p. 621) runs :—"This lofty mosque was built during the time of the great Sultan, the chief of Sayyids, Abul Fath Muhammad Masūm Khān—May God perpetuate his kingdom for ever, O Lord, O Thou who remainest!—by the high and exalted Khān, Khān Muhammad, son of Tūi Mḥammad Khān Qāqshāl, in the year 989."

Qāqshāl is the name of a Turkish clan which had received extensive *jāgirs* in North Bengal, particularly Dinājpur. They joined in the great rebellion that broke out in Jaunpur, Bengal and Bihar against Akbar in 1579 in consequence of the resentment of the Muhammadan nobles at having their revenue-free grants withdrawn and also at the hostility now shown by Akbar to the religion of Islām. In this rebellion Masūm Khān and the Qāqshāls were prominent, so much so that Masūm Khān was known to the Muhammadan historians

as Masūm Khān-i-Asi, i.e., the rebel; he is generally known by the suffix Kābuli, but appears to have been a Turbati, i.e., a member of a tribe of Khorāsān. He was a nephew of the Vizier of Hamayun, distinguished himself in the war against the Afghān chiefs and was promoted to the rank of Commander of One Thousand for bravery shown in a fight in which the notorious Kāla Pahār was killed.

When the rebellion broke out, Masūm Khān became one of its chief leaders. The Governor of Bengal, Muzaffar Khān, was killed at Tānda, where he had taken refuge; and Todar Mal, who was sent by Akbar to quell the rising, was unable to face the army of Masūm Khān and the Qāqshāls, which numbered 30,000, and had to shut himself up in the fort of Monghyr. The Qāqshāls, however, having been gained over by the Imperialists, left Masūm Khān, and the rebel army dispersed. Subsequently, Masūm Khān reappeared with a fresh army, which he had raised in Bhāti, i.e., the country along the Brahmaputra and the Meghna and in the Sundarbans, and plundered Western Bengal. He was, however, forced to fall back before the Imperialist forces and fled to Bhāti, where he found shelter with Isa Khān and at length died in 1599 A.D. after long fighting near Sonārgāon and Bhawāl. As the inscription quoted above shows, he had the audacity to assume royal prerogatives.*

According to tradition, Masūm Khān, who is also called locally Maddam Khān, excavated a large tank at Chātmohar and had his palace to the north of it on a spot bounded on the north by the Baral, on the south by the Atrai and on the west by a large tank, while his troops were stationed in the quarter called after them Pathānpāra. The presence of stone blocks with images of Hindu deities carved on the reverse shows that a Hindu shrine (or shrines) was demolished to afford material for the mosque.

Handial.—A village in the north-west of the Chātmohar thana. It is a place of some antiquity containing a temple of Jagannāth, an inscription on which shows that it was repaired by one Bhawāni Dās in the Saka year 1512, i.e., 1590 A.D. It was once a prosperous trade mart, which is mentioned under the spelling of Hurrial in Hamilton's *East India Gazetteer* (1828) as one of the three chief towns of Rājshāhi, which, it is said, "used to produce four-fifths of all the silk, raw or manufactured, used in or exported from Hindustan." The following account is given of it:—"A commercial mart where the East

* Blochmann, *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol. I, pp. 189, 226, 242, 243, 251, 431.

India Company has long had an established factory for the purchasing of silk and cotton goods. This commercial residency has for some time past been incorporated with that of Comerecolly" (the modern Kumārkhālī in Nadia district). It appears to have lost its prosperity owing to fluvial changes, but was the headquarters of a thāna at least as late as 1845.

Hardinge bridge.—This bridge carries the main line of the Eastern Bengal Railway over the Padma at a point south of Pāksi, where the river is over one mile in width. It was completed in 1915 during the viceroyalty of Lord Hardinge after whom it is named. With a length of 5,900 feet and 15 spans of 350 feet each, it is one of the longest bridges in the world and its construction was a great feat of engineering. The wells carrying the piers had to be sunk to an exceptional depth (150 feet) to ensure its stability, built as it is over a treacherous sandy river bed. Training works had to be constructed along the banks of the Padma to keep the river in its channel, for there is a volume of 2½ million cubic feet of water passing under the bridge at high flood and a variation of 30 feet between lowest and highest water-level.

Hati Kumrālī.—A village in thāna Ullāpāra, which contains an interesting archæological structure. This is a high *Dolmancha*, consisting of a raised platform with a brick arch over it, from which was suspended a throne for the god Krishna and his consort Radha at the time of the *Doljātra*. The arch was damaged and partially sunk during the earthquake of 1897.

Pabna.—Headquarters of the district situated on the river Ichhāmāti, which flows through the town. The area within municipal limits is five square miles and the population, which was 19,274 in 1911, was 19,343 according to the census of 1921. It depends for its water-supply on the river Ichhāmāti, five municipal reserved tanks and private wells. The Ichhāmāti is a dying river, which in the hot weather is reduced to a series of shallow pools of water: the tanks are fed from the river Padma, with which they are connected by open water-courses. There are 39 miles of roads in the municipal area, nine of which are *pucka*, the rest being *kutcha*, and one market, which is private property. Refuse is disposed of in a trenching-ground, nearly 4½ *bighas* in area, outside the municipality. There are four municipal burial-grounds and a burning-ghāt on the bank of the Padma. The town is connected by a metalled road with Bājītpur, a village two miles away on the Padma, in which there are a steamer station and some rice mills.

The town contains the usual public offices of a district headquarters and also a Town Hall. The chief educational institutions are the Edward College, the Pābna Zila School, the Elliott-Banamāli Technical School and the Government Weaving School, of which an account will be found in Chapter XII. Archaeologically the most interesting building is a Hindu temple, called Jor Bangla, to the north-east of the town. The name is due to the shape of the shrine, which resembles two houses joined together. It is made of brick, with fine brick carvings in front. The plinth is now only about 2 feet from the ground, but was formerly much higher, the building having sunk some feet during the earthquake of 1897. It is said to have been built by one Brajamohan Krori, a *tahsildār* under the Nawāb of Bengal, about the middle of the eighteenth century. The tradition is that he was a millionaire, whence his name, and acquired vast wealth at the expense of the Nawāb. Having failed in his remittances of revenue, the Nawāb sent a detachment to arrest him, whereupon the Krori threw his treasure into a tank to the north of the temple and to escape dishonour drowned himself and his family in it. Traces of a small brick-built house, which is said to have been his residence, are visible about 10 yards to the east of the temple.

Of recent years the erosion of the town by the Padma has been a serious problem. About 200 years ago Pābna was on the bank of the Ganges, but gradually the offtake of the Ichhāmāti silted up, and a high sandy *char* formed at its mouth, which was gradually inhabited by an agricultural population. On this *char* land a factory was erected by an indigo planter opposite the court buildings; when it ceased to be used as a factory, it was converted into the Collector's residence. To the south of this a zamīndār subsequently built a *pucka* house which was purchased by Government and converted into a Circuit House shortly before 1916: it is still known locally as Bāgchi's house. The only other buildings of importance on this land are the residence of the Superintendent of Police constructed in 1913, the bonded warehouse and *guru*-training school, which were erected subsequently.

Before 1916 the tortuous Ichhāmāti took off from the Ganges near the steamer ghāt at Bājīpur, 2 miles from the civil station. From a survey made in 1912, it was found that the north bank of the Ganges was over half a mile from the Circuit House on the bank of the Ichhāmāti. In the rainy season of 1916 the river started cutting its left bank from the

steamer ghāt at Bājītpur and eroded inland for over 1½ miles. The erosion was severe during the floods of 1917, so much so that in one month the whole of the *char* land, half a mile wide, near the Circuit House, was carried away, and the Circuit House had to be dismantled, as the river reached one corner of the building. The erosion was again rapid during the floods of 1918, but was not so severe as in the previous year.

During the floods of 1919 the situation was carefully surveyed by the Public Works Department. The extent of the erosion had a very serious effect on the *basti* on the *char* land in villages Sādhupara and Rānchandrāpur, as the soil consisted of almost loose sand. A solid block of a very hard soil was found at and above the steamer ghāt at Bājītpur, which resisted the erosion considerably. It was then decided to revet a length of 1,650 feet along the bank down to the Collector's residence, to which the river had approached. This revetment, which stretched from near Tafazzul Husain's house down to the road to the Ganges above the old Collector's residence, was constructed in 1920, before the river rose, at a cost of nearly Rs. 2 lakhs. In August 1920 the erosion became stronger and the greater portion of the mattresses slipped into the river and were carried away. Though the revetment was very badly damaged, and the repairs done during the rains were also of little service, it checked the erosion to a very large extent during the floods, but some erosion took place in the unprotected bank above and below the revetment. Next year (1921) repairs to the revetment were completed before the floods at a cost of Rs. 1,19,000 : the repairs to the old revetment partly slipped during the floods of 1921 and repairs were again carried out. An extension of the revetment lower down for 900 feet, in order to protect the Collector's residence (the old Nil Kuthi), was also finished before the floods of 1921, at a cost of Rs. 78,000 : this extension was not materially damaged during the flood of 1921.

There is an embankment with sluice gates, about a mile in length, along the right bank of the Ichhāmāti, which was constructed after the floods of 1890 to protect the town from being inundated by that river when in high flood.

Potājia.—Village in thana Shāhzādpur, situated about 2 miles south-west of Shāhzādpur. It contains a high school and an old Hindu temple, now ruinous, which is known as Nabaratna. Tradition relates that one of the Mughal Nawābs, who was passing by Potājia on his way from Murhīdābād to Dacca, ordered it to be demolished, and the two top stories

were pulled down. This may be connected with the orders issued by the emperor Shāh Jahān in 1632 and subsequently reissued by Aurangzeb that all Hindu temples which had recently been erected should be demolished.

Sara.—Village in the headquarters subdivision situated on the north bank of the Ganges (Padma). It was formerly the terminus of the northern section of the Eastern Bengal Railway and was connected by a service of ferry steamers with Damukdia on the south bank of the river. Passengers proceeding to Calcutta were here transferred to the ferry steamers, but this break in the journey has ceased since the opening of the Hardinge bridge. It contains a police-station, high school and post and telegraph office.

Shahzadpur.—Village in the south of the Sirājganj subdivision, situated 7 miles south of the Sāra-Sirājganj Railway, with which it is connected by the old Pābna-Sirājganj road. It is a place of some antiquity with influential residents, both Hindu and Muhammadan, and contains several large zamīndārs' cutcherries. It is the headquarters of a Deputy Magistrate, who has jurisdiction over the Mathura thāna, and a local bench of Honorary Magistrates is held in it. It is also the headquarters of an Inspector of Police and contains a charitable dispensary, a sub-registry office, a public library and several schools, including a *guru*-training school. It was the seat of a Munsif's Court for many years until 1894, when the building was burnt down and the Court was removed to Sirājganj.

An interesting account of its history and monuments is given by Maulavi Abdul Wali in an article *On the Antiquity and Traditions of Shāhzādpur*, which was published in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Part I, No. 3, 1904 :—

"Shāhzādpur, the headquarters of a thāna and till lately of a Munsifi, is situated on the south centre of the great jute-producing subdivision of Sirājganj, which forms the northern half of the district of Pābna. Shāhzādpur is famous for a superb Masjid, the '*mazārs* of Makhdūm Shāh Daula' 'Shahid' and other Muhammadans, and an annual fair. There is no written account of the early colonists. The deeds and papers are said to have suffered loss on account of the climate, fire, or carelessness.

"*The traditions.*—Hazrat Muāzz-ibn-Jabl, the King of Yaman in Arabia, and a companion of the prophet, had two sons and a daughter. One of these two Shāhzādas (princes) Makhdūm Shāh Daula, with the permission of his father, left his native

land on a religious expedition, for the spread of Islām, consisting of three of his nephews (sister's sons)—Khwāja Kalān Dānishmand, Khwāja Nūr, and Khwāja Anwar, his sister, twelve renowned Darvishes, and a large number of followers. They sailed in ships, 7 or 40 in number, on their expedition. Arriving at Bokhāra, Shah Jalālud-Din Bokhāri, a saint of the place, welcomed the pilgrims, and presented a few ash-coloured (*khāki*) pigeons to the Makhdūm Sāhib. After a long and circuitous voyage, the missionaries arrived at a place, now called Potājia, two miles south of Shāhzādpur. The whole country at that time was under water and appeared as a vast ocean. The ships struck on a sandy bed, and consequently the expedition could not proceed up. The Bokhāra pigeons used, as usual, to leave the ships in the morning and return to them by the evening-tide. After a few days' halt, the people on board noticed in the feet of the birds fresh clay and sand. On the following day a *dinhi* (boat) was sent towards the flight of the birds, and a newly forming *char*, subsequently named Shāhzādpur, was discovered. The ships being disentangled and removed, the party landed upon the *char* land. Little by little when the water subsided, the little *char* was transformed into an extensive one. On this spot, to commemorate the landing, a mosque was built by order of the Makhdūm Sāhib.

"At that time, the country was under the Hindu Raja of Suba-i-Bihār, who would not allow a foreign colony to be established in his dominion, and sent a large army to drive the colonists away. Then ensued a life-and-death struggle between the little band of foreign Muslims on one side, and the vast army of the native king on the other. Three bloody battles were fought, in two of which the devoted followers of the Makhdūm Sāhib were victorious. In the third, the saintly prince was killed. Two of his nephews, the Darvishes, as well as a large number of his followers, were killed by stratagem in one or other of these battles. The lady who was the sister of the Makhdūm Sāhib preferred death to dishonour, and is believed to have thrown herself into a water-pool and perished.

"A soldier of the enemy, who was concealed, cut off the head of the saint while the latter was deeply engaged in saying his afternoon (*asr*) *namāz*. The man left at once with the head for the Raja of Suba-i-Bihār. The head being placed before the king, the latter perceiving in it celestial radiance and supernatural calm became very much astonished and intensely sorry and ashamed at the conduct of the soldier. Having

summoned the leading Musalmāns of Bihār, the head was buried with due solemnity and a *masjid* constructed over the brick-tomb. A fair is held every year near the place ever since. At Shāhzādpur, on the other hand, the headless body was deposited in a stone-coffin, and buried by the surviving nephew, Khwāja Shāh Nūr, and his other followers about ten *rasis* to the south of the mosque.

“*The tombs.*—As stated above, there fell in the struggle a large number of the Muslims. The shrine of the Makhdūm Sāhib ‘Shahid’ (the Martyr) being in a low-lying tract at some distance from the mosque, those who used to go there to perform *ziyarat* had to suffer discomfort or were exposed to danger in wading their way through marshes in the rains and on account of the snakes. The saint appeared to one of the faithful and directed the coffin to be removed. Accordingly it was buried by the side of the mosque. The tombs or graveyards are all on the south of the *masjid*. Besides the shrine of the Makhdūm Sāhib and his nephews, there exist 18 other tombs, viz., the tombs of the 12 Darvishes, named—(1) Shamsud-Dīn Tabrizi, (2) Shāh Yūsuf, (3) Shāh Khengawār, (4) Shāh Azmat, (5) Hasila-pīr, (6) Shāh Bodla, (7) Shāh Ahmad, (8) Shāh Mahmūd. The names of the other four are not remembered. The names of six other *auliya*, who settled and died subsequently, are—(13) Shāh Mastān, (14) Shāh Habibullah, (15) Shāh Madār, (16) Hādī Sāhib. The names of the other two are not known.”

In connection with the tomb of Shāh Mastān, Maulvi Abdul Wali mentions a curious phenomenon: “Sometimes in the dark night, it is said, a column of light, brighter far than the electricity, is seen ascending up from the *astāna* of Shāh Mastān towards the sky, which phenomenon lasts a few minutes.”

“The shrine of Khwāja Kālān Dānishmand is to the right side of that of the Makhdūm Sāhib the ‘Martyr,’ and the shrines of his other nephews and of the Darvishes are hard-by. The shrines of Makhdūm Sāhib, Khwāja Kālān Dānishmand, and Darvish Shāh Yūsuf are enclosed with walls; and lately a corrugated iron roof of octagonal shape has been put over them. Shamsud-Dīn Tabrizi was Makhdūm Sāhib’s teacher. His tomb is enclosed with walls (4’ 6” high). Shāh Yūsuf was a companion (*ashiq*). Out of the *Wakf* estate, a few acres are set apart for the expenses of lighting the *astāna* of Shāh Khengawār and for looking after it. This is done by a paid

servant. Hindus and Musalmāns make offerings to Darvish Shāh Habtullah's shrine.

"There are two *ganj-i-shāhidān* (literally 'mart of martyrs,' i.e., two large pits, where a large number of martyrs were buried), besides the above tombs:—(1) by the side of the mosque, where respectable persons were interned, and (2) some ten *rasas* to the south of the mosque, where soldiers were buried, and where Makhdūm Sāhib himself was buried at first. The tombs have no inscriptions. The little water-pool, where the Makhdūm Sāhib's sister perished, is called Sati Bibīr Khāl (or the watery grave of the virgin lady). It lay close to the mosque. Pilgrims used to throw sugar and *batāsa*, etc., into it to have their desires fulfilled. Owing to the encroachment of the river, the identical spot where the virgin was drowned cannot be ascertained. Consequently the practice of throwing sweetmeats has of late ceased.

"*The place and the population.*—The place is called Shāhzādpur, after the title of Hazrat Makhdūm Sāhib, who was the Shāhzāda of Yaman. The Pargana Yūsufshāhi, in which is situated Shāhzādpur, is called so, after the name of the Makhdūm Sāhib's companion Yūsuf Shāh." In this connection the author quotes from the account of the Pābna district given in the *Statistical Account of Bengal*, Volume IX, 1876:—"Most of the mahāls (revenue-free estates) situated in Sirājganj are small and many of them are reported to be connected with the history of the Makhdūm Sāhib, whose cubit was the unit of measurement in Pargana Yūsufshāhi, until the zamīndārs introduced short measures there."

"The population of the place is about ten thousand souls. The Muhammadans are half as much again as the Hindus. Of the three nephews of the Makhdūm Sāhib, Khwāja Kalān Dānishmand was not married, and Khwāja Anwar died childless. Khwāja Nur, the only surviving nephew of the Makhdūm Sāhib, married a Muhammadan princess of Sonārgāon. Their descendants are the present Mutawallis. With the Sonārgāon princess came a large number of persons, both Hindus and Muslims, who with the old survivals re-established the colony. The present inhabitants of Shāhzādpur are supposed to be their descendants. Shāhzādpur is divided into fourteen *muhallas* or sections, according to the origin, profession, rank, etc., of the emigrants from Sonārgāon. The following are the mahallas:—(1) Haidarābād, (2) Kandahārī-pāra, (3) Pathān-pāra, (4) Mihtar-pāra, (5) Mughalhātta,

(6) Kāghazi-tola, (7) Kāzi-pāra, (8) Mulla-pāra, (9) Chunia-khāli-pāra, (10) Katgar-pāra, (11) Mutia-pāra, (12) Dhari-pāra, (13) Char-pāra, (14) Andhār-kotha. The place whence earth was dug, and in which lime was deposited, for the construction of the buildings, is called Chunia-Khāli, and the *pāra* Chuniakhāli-pāra (or lime-tank-quarter). There was a jail or house of correction, where criminals used to be imprisoned and so called "Andhār-kotha or Black Hole." Its traces can still be seen. From it the quarter takes its name.

"*The mosque*.—Area of the interior · Length 51 feet 9 inches, breadth 31 feet 5 inches, height 16 feet 2 inches. Area of the exterior: Length 62 feet 9 inches, breadth 41 feet 3½ inches, height 19 feet 10 inches. The wall is 5 feet 7 inches thick. There are five door-ways, each measuring 7 feet 5 inches in height by 6 feet ½ inch in breadth. The utmost height of the domes (15 in number) from the floor of the temple is 20 feet 9 inches. The mosque is built of bricks and lime of cowries. The edifice is supported by 28 pillars of black basalt, one of which is a little dissimilar from others in colour. It is pressed, contrary to the Islamic Law, by women to their bosom, praying for the birth of children. Their vows, it is supposed, are fulfilled. Attached to the western inner wall of the *masjid*, on a platform, measuring 6 feet 10 inches in length, 5 feet 6 inches in breadth and 6 feet 8 inches in height, is constructed the *mimbar* or pulpit, 5 feet 2 inches high, having the same length and breadth as the platform beneath. An arched staircase, with seven steps, is so constructed as to touch the pulpit. There is a brick *angna* or platform in front of the temple. The floor of the latter is higher than that of the former by one inch. On both sides of the platform, north and south, walls have been built, having an underground base of 4 feet 6 inches. The jambs of the doors are constructed of black basalt. Over the pulpit, and on the outer walls of the temple, are sculptured beautiful arabesques, consisting of foliage, fruits and other parts of the plant. Lengthwise on both sides of the walls there are half a dozen small false panellings made in plaster.

"*The Waqf Estate*.—The Shāhzādpur mosque is endowed with 722 *bighas* of rent-free lands held direct from Government by trustees or *mutawallis* who are descended, as stated above, from Khwāja Shāh Nar and the Sonārgāon princess. Of these lands only 15 *khadas* are set apart for the service of the temple. The remaining lands were given away to the original

settlers, many of whose descendants still enjoy *lakhirāj*, *madad-i-māsh* and other kinds of tenures.

"*The fair*.—A *melā* or fair is held every year, close to the *masjid*, from the end of Chait to the beginning of Baisākh (April-May) which lasts for about a month. It is visited by Hindus and Muhammadans from far and near. The offerings consist of rice, fowls, sugar and sweets, also pice for the *chirāghī*, for the fulfilment of their desires. The *melā* is visited by about seven thousand people. The species of the Bokhāra pigeons, given by Shah Jalālud-Dīn Bokhāri, and called after him Jalālī *kaḅutar*, still survive, and can be seen in the precincts of the Shāhzādpur mosque as well as in the neighbouring villages.

"Shāhzādpur of the present is not in many respects the Shāhzādpur of the past. Yet it tells the tales of a distant and dismal past—by its mosque and tombs. The site of a bloody battle-field is indicated by the promiscuously buried remains of the martyrs. Despite its reclaimed marshes and dried-up swamps, we can reasonably picture a time when the place was an alluvial formation, fit for a petty trading colony."

Maulavi Abdul Wali ends his article by explaining that the names of the Makhdūm Sāhib and of his nephews show that "they must have been born in Iran, or Turan: they were rather known by their sobriquets than by their proper names." His conclusion as to the date of Makhdūm Sāhib is that he came to, and settled in, Bengal in the sixth century of the Hijri—about the time of Muhammad Bakhtyār Khilji's conquest of Lakhnauti in 600 H. or 1203 A. D. He adds:—"It is a significant fact that most of the saints of the time who came to India were from the Empire of Bokhāra, that is, Tūrkistān or Central Asia, and were originally Arabs and entitled 'Khawāja.' His settlements at Yūsufshāhi may be said to synchronise with the conquest of Bengal by the Khilji general, Muhammad Bakhtyār."

Sirājganj.—Headquarters of the Sirājganj subdivision, situated on the bank of the Jamuna. The river Dhānbāndi passes through the town and is spanned by a bridge of 120 feet in one span. The foundation stone was laid by Sir Charles Elliott, then Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, after whom it is called the Elliott bridge. The bridge was completed in 1893 at a cost of Rs. 45,000, which was met by local subscriptions amounting to Rs. 30,000 and a donation of Rs. 15,000, contributed by the Pābna District Board. The earthquake of 1897

damaged the abutments, which sunk a little. The river has largely silted up and in the dry season consists of a number of pools of water.

Sirājganj is referred to in Hamilton's *East India Gazetteer* (1828) as "a considerable commercial mart. It appears to have arisen since Major Rennell's survey in 1784 and is the greatest place of trade in this corner of Bengal." It became a subdivisional headquarters in 1845, the first Subdivisional Officer being a Deputy Magistrate named Barry. He was in charge during the Mutiny of 1857, when he fortified his house and with the help of a small gunboat on the river was ready to meet any attack. Mr. Barry established one of the first jute presses at Sirājganj. He resigned Government service to open a general commission business and to work a hand screw which he had constructed for pressing jute into bales for export. On his return to Europe (where he eventually became M. P. for Cork), he sold the good-will of his business to a company for spinning and weaving jute, which he promoted. This company went into liquidation in 1867, there being no funds to complete the building of the factory. A new company, called the Sirājganj Jute Co. (Limited), purchased for Rs. 1,65,000 the works, which had originally cost Rs. 7,80,000, completed their construction and opened the factory in 1869. The buildings were shattered by the earthquake of 1897, after which the company, the agents of which at that time were Andrew Yule & Co., removed its business. The site was sold to Babu Hem Chandra Chaudhuri and part of it was subsequently acquired for the railway station.

Sirājganj is, next to Nārāyanganj, the most important jute market in Bengal outside Calcutta, jute being brought to it from the west of Mymensingh and from Pābna, Bogra, Cooch-Behar, Rangpur and Goālpāra and pressed into bales, which are either railed or shipped by river steamer to Calcutta. It also collects the agricultural produce of Pābna and the neighbouring districts for export to Calcutta and distributes the imports of salt, piece-goods, etc. It contains agencies of Ralli Brothers, David & Co. and others, as well as a branch (pay office) of the Imperial Bank of India, and it is an important river steamer station. A branch of the Australian Baptist Mission (Tasmanian field) is established there. There are two high schools, a senior Madrasa and a charitable dispensary in the town.

The area within municipal limits extends over 11½ square miles, and the population, which was 24,777 in 1911, is 25 518

according to the census of 1921. The town obtains its water-supply from a large number of wells, both municipal and private, the rivers Kāta Khāl and Dhānbāndi and a few small tanks; there are about 150 municipal wells, all *pucka*, and the people generally use well water for drinking purposes. The roads within the town have a total length of 25 miles, of which only 3 miles are metalled. There are two markets, one of which is municipal and the other (called the Ganj Bazar) belongs to several zamindārs. There are two trenching-grounds with an area of 12 *bighas*. A municipal burning-*ghāt* has been established on the river Dhānbāndi, and there are one municipal and two private burial-grounds. The natural drainage is towards the river Dhānbāndi and most of the drains discharge into it or into the ditches, excavations and *jhils* with which the town abounds.

The following description of Sirājganj published in 1876 gives an interesting account of its early history and of its appearance at that time:—"Sir George Campbell once referred to Sirājganj as 'a town without houses,' and such is the appearance which it presents to the eye of the voyager on the Brahmaputra river. From the deck of his steamer the passenger can at once perceive that he has reached a place where trade is active. Small boats collected together in little fleets are approaching the mart from the north; larger vessels are departing from the other entrance of the natural harbour, and making for Calcutta. On the shore, crowds of coolies are busy in landing open barks of jute, packing them into drums and reshipping the fibre in this form on board the flats and the other craft bound for the south. If it is the hour of the daily bazar, the brokers and local merchants are collected in light boats and are busily effecting their purchases. The bright head-dresses of the Kāyas or Mārwaris, from the native state of Mārwar, are sufficiently numerous to give to the assembly a liveliness, which is not much increased by the white dress of the Bengali *mahājan*, or the riding costume and the sola (pith) hat of the European. The signs of a large and keen traffic are unmistakable.

"The strangeness of the sight consists in this, that the scene of so much commercial energy is laid amidst a waste of sands, where there is not a tree to afford shade, and barely a shed to give shelter. Some five miles from the mart, two factory chimneys may be seen rising above a line of trees; and these indicate the position of the real town of Sirājganj. Between their homes and the bazar, all engaged in the trade have

to go and come daily over this great extent of open *char*. It will be easily understood that this is no pleasant journey in the hot season, when the glare of the sun is reflected from the sand, which is blown in clouds by the strong wind then prevailing. A great number even of the poorest classes consider it necessary to keep ponies, in order to perform it with the less fatigue. Early in June comes a relief. The river rises, flooding the sands on which the bazar had been held. It fills up and renders navigable a small channel through the town of Sirājganj itself. For the next four months, trade is carried on with every convenience close to the doors of the merchants. In October, the bazar shifts again to some new spot, the nearest natural haven formed by the floods of the previous season on the bank of the Jamuna. When we add that between the desertion of one bazar and the formation of another, there is often an interval of weeks, during which business is almost suspended, it will be clear that Sirājganj has its disadvantages as a port.

"It will be asked how it came to pass that a place so badly adapted for the purpose came to be selected as the emporium of the trade of the Brahmaputra and its tributaries. The explanation is to be found in the shifting and uncertain character of these rivers. When, about sixty years ago, Sirājganj was founded by Sirāj Ali, the zamīndār whose name it still bears, it was built on the banks of the Brahmaputra. In the year 1848 the stream changed its course, and swamped the whole town. The traders retired before its encroachments, and established themselves on its new bank; but hardly had they done so when it again retreated, leaving their houses three miles from its stream. The site of the old town was thus left high and dry again, but not a trace of it can be discovered on the desolate *char* which now fills its place. The river has washed away not only the houses and roads, but also the soil on which they rested, to the depth of several feet.

"Warned by such losses the traders now prefer to live at a distance from the capricious stream, which, while it brings wealth to their doors, may at any moment destroy the fruit of their labours. They could find a much better site for a bazar ten miles down-stream, at a place called Belkuchi, but they do not wish for any more changes. Belkuchi might any day be washed away, or the stream might desert it; indeed, it appears that the merchants have made up their minds to stand by Sirājganj in spite of all inducements to move, as they are one by one building comfortable brick-houses in the place of the mat and bamboo dwellings in which they for years resided."

Ṣitlai.—A village in the Chātmohar thāna, situated a few miles south-east of Hāndiāl. It is the seat of one of the principal zamīndār families of the district and contains a charitable dispensary.

Tāntiband.—A village 12 miles east of Pābna in the north-east of the Sujānagar thāna of the Sadar subdivision, which is the headquarters of a leading zamīndār family known as the Chaudhuri zamindars of Tāntiband. The founder of the family was Rādha Ballabh Chaudhuri, who served under the Mophul Emperors and was rewarded with considerable tracts of *lākhirāj* and some zamīndāris. The real architect of its fortunes was Upendra Narayan Chaudhuri, who held office under Government in the early days of British administration and succeeded in amassing a considerable fortune and acquiring large estates. From him have descended four different branches of the family. One of the family, Bijay Gobind Chaudhuri, as stated in Chapter II, undertook the defence of the route from Dacca to Pābna during the Mutiny and received from the Lieutenant-Governor "warm acknowledgments for his loyalty." The family has shown considerable munificence and public spirit. The road from Tāntiband to Pābna and the Sujānagar Bazar road were constructed by them. The cholera ward of the Pābna hospital was the gift of Abhay Gobind Chaudhuri. A library at Pābna was constructed by Annada Govind Chaudhuri and named after him: it was subsequently enlarged by his sons, Jnanada Gobind and others. The present members of the family maintain a charitable dispensary at Tāntiband. Śrī Gobind Chaudhuri obtained a *pātnī* lease of the town of Pābna some years ago from Mahārāja Rao Jogendra Nārāyan Ray of Lālgola in Murshidābād. The family is Barendra Brahman by caste and most of them live at Pābna. The four branches are represented by Jnanada Gobind Chaudhuri and his brothers, who have a 5 annas share, Kshirod Gobind Chaudhuri and his brothers, who have a 4 annas share, Śrī Gobind Chaudhuri and his sons, who have a 3 annas share, and Sudhangshu Gobind Chaudhuri, who has a 4 annas share.

Tara.—A village in the west of the Sirājganj subdivision, which contains a police-station, a high school and a dispensary. It is the headquarters of the family of the late Rai Banamālī Ray Bahādur, which owns the largest zamīndāri in the district. The family traces its descent to Basudeb Tālukdār, who lived in the 17th century. The name of his grandson Balarām Dās is, as mentioned later, commemorated

by an inscription of 1711 A.D. Balarām Dās was employed by the Nātor Rāj and adopted the title of Ray. On the death, in the early part of the 19th century, of Rām Sundar Ray, fifth in descent from Balarām Dās or Ray, the direct line terminated, and Rām Sundār's four successors were all adopted sons. The last of these was Rai Banamālī Ray Bahādur, who died in 1914, leaving two sons Kahitish Bhusan Ray and Rādhika Bhusan Ray. The title of Rai Bahādur was conferred upon Banamālī Ray in 1894 in recognition of his munificence and public spirit. He founded the Elliott-Banamālī Technical School at Pābna, the Banwārilāl High School at Sirājganj and the high school and dispensary at Tārās. He also contributed Rs. 50,000 to the Edward College at Pābna for the new college buildings. His eldest son Khitish Bhusan Ray, who was born in 1882, has also received the title of Rai Bahādur in recognition of his generosity and public spirit. The family has a large property in Pābna and also in the districts of Rājshāhi and Bogra with a rental of over Rs. 3 lakhs. Its members are Barendra Kayasths by caste and Vaishnavas by religion. Their headquarters at Tārās is known as Banwāri-nagar.

The village of Tārās contains many temples, one of which, a Siva temple, has two old inscriptions. One dates back to 1635 and is as follows :—

“শাকে বাম্বি শরা শুগেন্দু
গণিতে ঐরাম দেবান্ পরঃ ।
ঐনারায়ণ দেব এব স্মৃতিঃ ।
বর্নোঁক লোকোত্তর ।
প্রাসাদঃ ক্রতি দৃষ্টতো ।
নিরুপমঃ ভক্ত্যা দদৌ শস্তবে ।
মাতুঃ স্বর্গ স্থখ প্রয়াণ করণে
শোপান যেকঃ ভূবি ॥”

This may be translated :—

“The prosperous Nārāyana Deva, of meritorious deeds, after the prosperous Rām Deva, dedicated, with devotion to Sambhu, a temple, extraordinary even in heaven and incomparable either according to the Sāstras or to experience, as a staircase resting on earth for a comfortable journey of his mother to heaven in the

year counted by the moon, the arrow, and the horse of the Saka, era (i.e., 1557 Sakabda or 1635 A. D.).

The other inscription is :—

কালায়ি তর্কেন্নু মিভে শকাব্দে ।
বরং শিবস্তালয় মিষ্টকান্ধৈঃ ॥
শীর্ণং ক্ষুটফোদ্ধর ভেষ্য ভক্তগা ।
তস্মিন্ প্রবীণো বলরাম দাসঃ ॥

The English version of this inscription is “Balarām Dās, expert in his devotion to Siva, restores with bricks, etc., a superior temple of Siva, which was dilapidated and leaky, in the Saka year measured by the moon, systems of philosophy, fires and time (i.e., 1663 Sakabda or 1711 A. D.).”

Ullapara.—Village in the Sirājganj subdivision, situated 2 miles from the railway and lying on the main route from Sirājganj to Shāhzādpur, about 8 miles from the latter. It is the headquarters of a thāna and contains a sub-registry office, a high school and a dispensary. As stated in Chapter X, it was suggested at one time that it should be made a subdivisional headquarters, but the land in the neighbourhood is low-lying and intersected by *khāls*, and the cost of raising sites and making the place suitable for the headquarters of a subdivision would have been prohibitive.

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